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\*\*\*SUPPORT OUR TROOPS\*\*\*

*Pence Encourages Prayer for Troops and New Ways for Constituents to Show Support*

**Washington, Apr 2, 2003** - WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Congressman Mike Pence today encouraged Hoosiers to pray and utilize new ways to support our troops overseas. Pence said the Pentagon mail system is overloaded with letters and care packages in a display of overwhelming patriotism and support for Operation Iraqi Freedom and therefore announced new ways for constituents to show their support.

“Our men and women in harm’s way need the protection of an Almighty God,” said Pence. “I encourage my constituents to visit the President Prayer Team website (<http://www.presidentialprayerteam.org/>) and sign up to pray for a member of our armed forces.”

“In addition, high troop morale is an integral part of winning any war,” said Pence. “Hoosiers can play an important part in boosting the spirits and morale of our brave men and women overseas and help ensure final victory for the allied coalition.”

Pence said the USA Freedom Corps, an office President Bush created to foster volunteerism nationwide, has started “On the Homefront” and is teaming with the Department of Defense to offer a number of ways for citizens to express their gratitude to the troops, including:

- Donate to Operation USO Care Package at [www.usocares.org/home](http://www.usocares.org/home).
- Adopt a platoon at [www.adoptaplatoon.org](http://www.adoptaplatoon.org).

- Donate long-distance calling cards to so service members can call their families through Operation Uplink at [www.operationuplink.org](http://www.operationuplink.org).
- Send e-mail messages to deployed troops of any service from Indiana via <http://anyservicemember.navy.mil>.
- Donate gift certificates to military dependants in need at [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com).

If constituents do not have web access, they can call 1-877-USA-CORPS.

Pence also noted that families of reservists, National Guard men and women and active duty personnel need extra help in meeting basic home and family needs during deployment. The following are additional resources from the “On the Homefront” initiative:

- The local chapters of the American Legion, American Red Cross, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, BPO Elks of the USA, Camp Fire USA, National 4-H Headquarters, National Fraternal Congress of America, The Salvation Army, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and YMCA of the USA are among leading community service organizations providing ways for volunteers to help local military families.
- Working with the National Guard and Reserve, as well as with military bases, these organizations will match volunteers with families that need help in areas such as household repairs, spring cleanings or tutoring and direct those families to businesses and organizations that may be offering free or discounted services. Volunteers can also help families, including those who own small businesses, with specialized skills like major repairs, financial planning or legal services.
- Some of these organizations are also helping to take care of children, after school and on the weekends, whose families have a parent or caregiver stationed away from home. Organizations such as Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Camp Fire USA, National 4-H Headquarters, and YMCA of the USA are playing important roles in these efforts.
- Individuals can also make a difference at home by reaching out to share their time and

compassion with veterans to say “thank you” for their service to our country and by volunteering with a Department of Veterans Affairs hospital or other facility.

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